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ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography lists 27 Canadian doctoral dissertations in reading instruction written from 1928 through April 1971. Each citation describes the research investigations involved and the conclusions drawn. Some of the topics covered include: (1) remedial reading, (2) reading achievement, (3) perceptual skills, (4) parental participation, (5) cognition, (6) meaning, (7) sex differences in reading, (8) beginning reading, and (9) linguistics in reading. (HS)

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CANADIAN DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS IN READING EDUCATION

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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CS 000 035

At a Glance

Total No. of Dissertations

Outstanding Dissertations
(IRA Award)

Distribution by Universities	
Alberta	5
British Columbia	5
Calgary	1
Ottawa	7
Toronto	9

Distribution by Year			
1928	1	1961	1
1932	1	1966	1
1946	1	1967	2
1947	1	1968	1
1954	1	1969	7
1955	2	1970	2
1958	1	1971	
1959	4	(until April)	1

AHRENDT, K. M., An Analysis of the Effects of an Experimental Remedial Reading Program on the Comprehension Skills of Potential School Dropouts. University of British Columbia, 1969.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a specially designed remedial reading program consisting of intensive training sessions which emphasized the direct instruction of vocabulary skills on the comprehension skills of potential school dropouts.

Thirty-six grade-eight students were selected for this study. They were divided into three categories. Each category received four treatment lessons, forty minutes each over a period of four weeks.

The Instructional materials were worksheets prepared by the experimenter. Each subject was given the Gates-McGinitie Reading Test, Survey E, the School Interest Inventory, a pre- and post- paper-pencil Comprehension Test "X", and a common transfer task which consisted of a reading selection and comprehension questions.

The findings of this study indicate that the treatment effects observed in terms of the number of correct responses on the transfer task with acquired vocabularies were not significant. The treatment effects in terms of the time in minutes to the completion of the transfer task with acquired vocabularies were significant. It was also noted that the treatment with the use of contextual clues is no more effective than the treatment with the use of structural analysis with dictionary usage.

ANDRADE, TERESA MANALAD. Growth Patterns in Reading Achievement. University of British Columbia, 1969.

The purposes of this study were (1) to investigate and analyze patterns of growth in reading achievement from grade three through seven of children with different initial status of reading readiness and (2) to find out what early childhood characteristics distinguished those who had become good and poor readers in grade five.

The first part of the investigation was a retrospective study of 300 seventh graders who had available scores on the Metropolitan Readiness Tests in grade one and on the Stanford Achievement Test in grades three through seven. The subjects were randomly selected from a population of 517 children from 14 elementary schools. Growth patterns exhibited by pupils in the superior, high normal, low normal, and poor risk categories of reading readiness were compared.

The second part was an ex fact study in which attempt was made to identify certain pre-school and beginning school characteristics that differentiated the good from the poor grade-five readers.

Some of the conclusions arrived at were: (1) the three highest groups of readiness categories, the superior, high normal, and average maintained their relative positions throughout the entire five year period. (2) those in the superior group remained superior on the average. (3) in general, the boys surpassed the girls at all grade levels and (4) the good readers differed from the poor readers in twelve pre-school characteristics related to readiness.

BENISKOS, JEAN-MARIE. WISC Patterns and Reading Achievement. University of Ottawa, 1959.

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not a difference in WISC patterns could be found between three groups of grade-five and -six pupils who differed in reading achievement level.

The subjects of the study were 90 pupils in grades five and six who were matched for sex, age, number of years of schooling, unilinguality, and full scale IQ. The other factors were the absence of gross physical handicaps and personality problems.

The findings of the study revealed that although differences in reading achievement were found they were ascribable to sex differences on WISC scores rather than reading achievement.

BUCKLEY, GEOFFREY JOHN. Reading Achievement in Grade Five and Its Relationship to Parental Occupation, Verbal Intelligence, and Certain Environmental Factors. University of British Columbia, 1967.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between reading achievement and verbal intelligence, parental occupation and certain environmental factors.

Sixty grade-five children representing high, middle and low social class areas in Vancouver were randomly selected. The subjects were administered the Henmon-Nelson Test of Mental Ability and the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Tests V and R and were interviewed individually.

The results of this study showed that all mean scores were highest in the upper, moderate in the middle, and lowest in the lower class areas and that significant sex differences in means are few at .05 level and non-existent at the .01 level. It was also found that reading achievement was strongly related to verbal intelligence and to a lesser degree to parental occupation.

COSGRAVE, GERALD P. The Relative Importance of Different Horizontal Segments of Words for Legibility. University of Toronto, 1928.

The theory of Javal that the upper parts of words, particularly at the level of the upper portions of the linear letter, are more important in legibility than the lower portions was submitted to experimental investigation.

Legibility was tested by removing various horizontal segments from the type face of words and short paragraphs and noting the effect upon reading under four criteria of legibility. The measure of legibility in each case was the ratio of the score obtained with unmutilated to that with mutilated copy. Statistical analysis showed higher coefficients, thus supporting Javal's theory.

In addition, it was also found that words composed primarily of straight and angular letters were somewhat easier to recognize than curved-letter or mixed-letter words. Words with ascenders or descenders were more easily recognized than linear words.

CRAUSMAN, BURT. Temporal Perception of Good and Poor Readers. University of Ottawa, 1958.

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not there existed a difference in tachistoscopic perception between two groups of elementary school pupils who differed only in regard to their reading ability.

The two groups of 48 children, ages 7.10 to 11.2 were matched with respect to intelligence, sex, age and grade placement. A tachistoscope with flashmeter attachment was used to measure temporal perception.

The results obtained indicated clearly a difference in timed-perception between the two groups. It means that early training in developing greater perceptual acuity might help the potential reading disability cases.

de MERLIS, DORIS SOUTHERLAND. Phonetic-Kinesthetic Training in Reading for Primary pupils with Reversal and Inversion Difficulties. University of Ottawa, 1959.

This study was conducted to determine whether primary children who were handicapped in reading due to consistent directional confusion in word recognition could be helped to read adequately with phonetic-kinesthetic training.

A group of 25 children were selected from Grades I, II, and II, over a three-year period. These pupils were subjected to an intensive phonetic-kinesthetic training over eight months using specially prepared materials.

At the completion of the experiment it was found that there was significant improvement in children's reading performance as measured by the Gates Primary and Gates Advanced Primary. However, there were no significant differences in means in favor of the expected reading quotient of 100.

Suggestions were made for further study of later progress and of a methodology usable with older children.

EAVANCHKO, PETER O. The Dimensions of Children's Meaning Space. University of Alberta, 1970.

The purposes of this study were to investigate the nature of semantic processes and the concept of semantic space.

The number of pupils who participated in the final sample was 266 from Grade V and VIII in Alberta schools. A Semantic Features Test was developed for this study. The paired comparisons instrument was comprised of twenty-four categories of meaning found to be present in children's meaning responses.

The study revealed that there was a greater amount of correlation between the Semantic Features Test and the verbal subtests of the California Test of Mental Maturity than the non-verbal sub-tests of the same test. Also revealed was the greater correlation for the younger, Grade V subjects, as compared to the Grade VIII individuals. It was noted that the younger subjects showed dimensions of meaning which were qualitatively inferior to the meaning dimensions of the older subjects. The older subjects tended to place more emphasis on the class membership categories of meaning.

The study indicated new ways of organizing learning activities and selecting educational materials in the elementary and the junior high schools.

FAGAN, WILLIAM. An Investigation into the Relationship Between Reading Difficulties and the Number and Types of Sentence Transformations. University of Alberta, 1969.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the number and types of transformations (under the framework of transformational-generative grammar) which were found in the written language of three basal reader series at the grade-four level, and to determine by means of the "cloze" technique, the difficulty which these structures presented for pupils in grades four, five, and six.

For this purpose an analysis of the linguistic structures of twenty-one passages chosen randomly from three basal reader series at grade 4 level was done and from this a grammar of 43 transformational rules was developed. Three stories, one from each series was selected and written in four different forms, each containing 20 transformations. Further, six stories were selected from the series and each was written in five forms.

Statistical analysis indicated that the very presenct of Embedding and Deletion transformations tended to correlate more highly with a difficult sentence or passage than transformations of the other type. Results also showed that the type, not the number of transormations per sentence was a significant factor in determining the difficulty of a sentence.

FIDELIA, SISTER MARY. The Relative Effectiveness of Bloomfield's Linguistic Approach to Word-Attack As Compared with Phonics We Use. University of Ottawa, 1959.

This study was conducted to determine experimentally the relative effectiveness of the content and sequence of phonemes outlined by Bloomfield in Children's Reader, 1939 (unpublished) by comparing them with the content and sequence of the phonetic elements by the authors of Phonics We Use, 1957.

A total of 1,064 first-grade children in eleven Parochial Schools in the Chicago area participated in the study. The experimental group was taught word-attack skills using the Bloomfield's plan and the control group was taught with Phonics We Use. The experiment lasted twenty-three weeks.

The statistical analysis indicated no significant difference at .01 level of confidence between the means of the experimental and control group for (i) total reading, (ii) paragraph meaning, and (iii) word meaning.

The study suggests that since word-attack skills are cumulatively developed, a complete evaluation of the Bloomfield's plan can be obtained only at the end of the third or fourth grade.

HARDY, MADELINE. Clinical Follow-up Study of Disabled Readers. University of Toronto, 1968.

The purpose of this study was to investigate systematically the academic, vocational and social adjustment of a group of young adults who had been disabled readers and who had received clinical diagnosis and remedial treatment during their elementary school years.

The subjects were forty young people who were referred to the London (Ontario) Board of Education's Clinic in 1957 and had completed an individual remedial instruction program in 1961.

Some of the principal findings of this study were:

1. The amount of retardation, relative to the expected grade level, tended to increase after the termination of remedial treatment. Remedial help in spelling was not instrumental in reducing spelling retardation.
2. As a result of remedial treatment significant individual improvement occurred in silent and oral reading, and spelling during the referral-termination period; in silent and oral reading during the termination to follow-up period; and in silent and oral reading, and spelling during the referral to follow-up period.
3. The academic progress made by disabled readers was of a global nature.
4. Subjects who displayed deficiencies in visual function, perceptual and motor skill at referral tended to retain those defects.

5. When appropriate educational programs were provided, disabled readers were able to make a satisfactory educational adjustment.
6. The general vocational adjustment of the employed subjects were slightly inferior to their previous academic adjustment.

HOFF, HOWARD S. VAN. Parental Participation in a Primary Reading Program. University of Ottawa, 1954.

The purpose of this study was to investigate if parents' participation in primary reading program was beneficial for the pupils.

Forty participation pupils (median IQ - 110) were matched in pairs with forty control pupils (median IQ - 111). An orientation program was designed and offered to the parents throughout the school year. Participation pupils made higher scores on the Gates and Monroe Reading Tests. Critical ratios also supported this. Participation pupils also mastered the word analysis skills better, read more room library books and increased their reading of other books in the home. Parents' reaction also indicated that pupils benefited.

The study confirmed the view that the oriented parent in any school-sponsored program is in a favorable situation to help his child in primary reading.

HOLMES, ALFRED. Voluntary Reading of Toronto Public School Pupils: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study. University of Toronto, 1932.

The purpose of this study was to examine what and how much public school pupils read voluntarily.

The quantitative aspect of the study deals with 20,644 books read by 1223 pupils during the school year in three public schools in Toronto and the qualitative aspect deals with 25,575 books read by 1564 pupils.

Some important findings of this study were:

(i) There was a wide range of voluntary reading in boys and girls.

(ii) Girls read more than boys.

(iii) The proximity of a Public Library greatly increased the quantity and assured the quality of the books read.

JOHNSON, TERRY DAWSON. The Relationship Between Connotative Meaning and the Reading Achievement of Boys and Girls in Second Grade. University of British Columbia, 1969.

The purpose of this study was to examine if there was any significant difference between boys and girls in the meanings they attach to certain words and whether these meanings were significantly related to their reading achievement.

The subjects were 121 children in the second grade in Vancouver schools. They were administered the semantic differential, California Short-Form Test of Mental Maturity, and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, Primary B.

Statistical analysis of the data indicated there were barely any significant relationships between the concepts measured and the reading achievement of boys while there were several significant relationships in the case of girls. The failure to find any significant association in the case of boys was believed to be due to the level of reading ability measured by standardized reading tests. The proportion of male teachers in the elementary school appeared to be unrelated to reading achievement in boys or girls.

KOEBER, WALTER F. An Evaluation of Some Methods and Procedures in the Teaching of Reading to Non-Academic Adolescent Boys. University of Toronto, 1947.

This study was conducted to evaluate the progress in silent reading of an unselected group of non-academic adolescent boys who were transferred from an elementary to a special school for slow learners.

The subjects were 136 teenagers who were considered mentally or educationally retarded. They had spent an average of 7.7 years in the elementary schools where 97.5 of them had failed one or more grades. The average chronological age of boys at the beginning of the program was 13.11, average MA 10.2 and average IQ 73.

The boys were examined for their vision and hearing and were prescribed treatment. The Metronoscope was introduced as a novel method of presenting reading material with a view to capturing their interest. Simplified editions of some books, discussions, and differentiated individual guidance were used as major tools for teaching reading skills.

The sutdy emphasized the correction of defective vision, improvement of hearing, differentiated instruction and individual guidance as contributory factors in reading achievement.

LINN, J. R. The Influence of Home Environment on Grade 1 Reading Achievement. University of Toronto, 1955.

The purpose of this study was to discover the pre-school factors, chiefly in the home environment which are predictive of success or failure in reading at the end of Grade I.

The study was made with the use of two groups of Grade I pupils equated in pairs for intelligence and chronological age and free from physical disabilities, foreign language background, and other handicaps. The pupils in one group were superior readers and in the other poor readers.

Some of the important findings were (1) Grade I reading achievement was definitely related to the educational environment of the home, (2) there was no relationship between parental interest in child development and child's reading achievement, (3) the superior reader was more often found in families possessing energy and initiative, (4) significantly more superior readers were oldest children, (5) the child's reading achievement was definitely related to his reading activities in the home.

MADELEINE, SISTER MARY. The Effectiveness of a Multi-level Reading Program at the Intermediate Grade level. University of Ottawa, 1959.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate experimentally the relative effectiveness of the multilevel or SRA Laboratory approach to reading as compared with the conventional one-level reading approach in Grades 4, 5, and 6. The specific object was to determine the difference, if any, between the progress in total reading achievement, in comprehension, and in vocabulary growth of children exposed to two different reading programs.

The subjects for this experiment were approximately 3600 pupils from grades 4, 5, and 6 from twelve schools in the Chicago area. The experimental group was taught with the SRA Reading Laboratory for grades 2 - 9 and the control group with a one-level basal reading approach.

The SRA Achievement Series Reading Test, Form A was administered to all pupils after twenty-one weeks experience was completed.

The results of this study indicated that the children using the multi-level materials showed greater gains in Total Reading Achievement, Comprehension and Vocabulary.

MAMINTA, ROSARIO E. An Investigation of the Language Structures in Beginning Readers Compared with the Language Structures Taught for Oral Proficiency in the Teaching of English as a Second Language in the Philippines. University of British Columbia, 1969.

The purpose of this study was to analyze and comapre the language structures in the authorized basal readers with the language structures which are taught for oral proficiency in the teaching guides for English analysis and measurement.

The language samples from the oral language guides and the reading texts were analyzed and compared on two levels. The first analysis was concerned with the underlying basic patterns and the length of the T-units as well as other related structural features. The second level analysis determined the kinds and number of constructions produced by sentence-combining transformation.

The analysis of data revealed that there was a close similarity between the kinds of basic patterns which occurred in the oral language materials and in the readers. The length of the T-unit in the reader was greater than in the oral language materials. This suggests that the Filipino pupils are not adequately prepared to master English structures in the early grades.

MINKLER, FREDERICK. A Study of the Voluntary Reading Interests of Children in Canadian Elementary Schools. University of Toronto, 1946.

This study examined the voluntary reading interests of children in the intermediate grades of Canadian elementary schools. A specially prepared questionnaire was sent to 5,000 children across Canada. Responses from 50 teachers and 37 librarians were also included as additional information for the study.

Analysis of the data resulted in the following conclusions: (1) neither the type of school (rural, suburban, urban) nor the provincial area exert any significant influence on the reading interests of children (2) sex of the child was the strongest determinant of reading interest (3) a positive correlation exists between age and sex preference in reading (4) age, grade in school, mental ability and reading skill influence reading interests but to a less marked degree than does the sex of the child, and (5) the opinion of the adults did not provide a valid basis for the determination of children's reading interests.

NEVILLE, MARY H. The Effects of Oral and Echoic Responses in Beginning Reading. University of Calgary, 1967.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of intonation patterns of speech on beginning reading.

Ninety-six grade-one pupils were divided by aptitude for reading into two levels with two classes at each level. Three groups at each level were randomly chosen. One group read silently, another read orally, and the third listened as the experimenter read the page of reading and then made an echoic response. Two training sessions a day for ten days were given at both levels for each pre-primer.

A comparison of the oral and echoic response groups with the silent reading group showed greater fluency for oral reading in the echoic group but no difference for word recognition, word identification, or comprehension. Vocalization was found to be significantly higher in the silent reading group.

The findings of this study suggest that the beginning reading program should include oral and echoic responses as well as silent reading. The natural tendency for beginners to vocalize during silent reading should not cause concern since overt responses appear to promote the acquisition of certain reading skills.

PARTLOW, HUGH RUSSELL. A Comparison of St. Catherines Public School Standards in Arithmetic and Reading, 1933-38 and 1952-54. University of Toronto, 1955.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether standards in Arithmetic and Reading required by St. Catherines Public School teachers, and achieved by St. Catherine Public School pupils were higher or lower in the fifties than they were in the thirties.

Two tests were used for comparison of pupil achievement. The Dominion Arithmetic Test of Fundamental Operations was administered to 1277 pupils in grades 5, 6 and 7 in 1936 and to 1329 pupils in the same grade in 1954. The Thorndike-McCall Reading Scale was given to 370 pupils in grade 6 in 1938 and to 441 pupils in the same grade in 1951.

The statistical analysis showed that there was no decline in Arithmetic and Reading standards but rather there was a significant overall improvement at the end of the period. Five factors considered to have contributed to the improvement were: (1) the marked increase in principals' time for supervision, (2) significant improvement in the qualification of teachers, (3) considerable improvement of in-service education of teachers, (4) introducation of remedial teaching and (5) changes in testbooks and teacher's manuals.

RAWSON, HILDRED I. A Study of the Relationships and Development of Reading and Cognition. University of Alberta, 1969.

This study was designed to explore relationships between comparable cognitive operations under two sets of conditions: one in which logical operations of conservation, classification, deduction, induction and probability reasoning are required in response to concrete-verbal stimuli; the second in which corresponding operations are required in reading.

STEP Reading, Form 4B, and Concrete Tests and Stories Tests (constructed by the experimenter) consisting of corresponding test items were administered to a sample of 100 grade-four children, randomly selected from grade-four classes.

Relationships between the stories test and sex, and STEP Reading and sex were found to be of a low order. On the Concrete Tests, however, boys appeared to be significantly in advance of girls on operations of conservation and of inductive and probability reasoning. The statistical analysis of the data indicated that there was a maximum possible relation between Concrete Tests and Stories tests when taken as composites. It was also considered that of the logical operations assessed, only conservation was likely to be equally available in reading and concrete situations to nine- and ten-year old children.

Implications for the preparation of materials and the development of instructional techniques were drawn.

ROBERTSON, JEAN ELIZABETH. An Investigation of Pupil Understanding of Connectives in Reading. University of Alberta, 1966.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the understanding of connectives in reading by children in grades four through six. The researcher constructed a Connectives Reading Test for this study. The test consisted of 150 multiple-choice items designed to test the reading comprehension of students using seventeen selected connectives in some of the sentence structures of basal readers.

The subjects were 402 children in Alberta schools, stratified according to their place of residence in urban, small-town or rural areas.

The investigation revealed that there is a significant relationship between the understanding a child has of connectives and his sex, mental age, and abilities in listening, reading, and written language. Six of seventeen connectives, "however, thus, which, although, and yet" showed particular difficulties, some of them because they were characteristic only of the printed page or because they had not become common in the speech of students.

ROGERS, DENIS CYRIL. An Investigation of the Auditory Memory Abilities of Grade II Retarded-Underachieving Readers and Competent-Achieving Readers Under Conditions of Reinforcement and Non-Reinforcement. University of Toronto, 1969.

The study was concerned with retarded-underachieving readers, and with the possible relationship of auditory memory to their reading-failure.

Fifty retarded-underachieving readers were equated for sex and age with fifty competent-achieving readers. All subjects were from grade 2. The screening instruments used were the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test, the Longe-Thorndike Non-Verbal Intelligence Test, the Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test and an audiometer. In addition, some memory tests developed by the author were also used. Subjects in the main study were reinforced in their second attempt by praise, knowledge of progress, and the prospect of reward.

Analysis of the data confirmed highly significant differences between the two groups on the memory span tests. The reinforcement procedures caused highly significant increases in the scores of both groups.

The study suggests that poor auditory memory is likely a causal factor in reading retardation and that the auditory memory of retarded readers can be influenced by reinforcement.

TROSKY, O KARKA S. Modifications in Teachers' Questioning Behavior in the Development of Reading Comprehension and a Series of Supervisory Conferences. University of Toronto, 1971.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the percentage of teachers' questions designed to solicit recognition and recall and a series of supervisory conferences during which the teachers were made aware of specific dimensions of reading comprehension. The study sought to identify and describe the modifications, if any, of teacher's questioning behavior relative to six dimensions: recognition, translation, inference, evaluation, imagining, and explanation.

The sample of this study was limited to five teachers at the third grade level. Each was treated as a separate case study. The data was obtained from taped content of the lessons taught, and from the three conferences held with each teacher.

The results showed no significant changes following the first and second conferences; after the third conference, three of the five teachers decreased the proportion of their recognition questions. The study also suggests that well-structured series of supervisory conferences can further the professional growth of the teacher.

TRUSZKA, SISTER MARY GREGORY. A Survey of the Reading Interests of Catholic High School Girls with Implications for Guidance Practices. University of Ottawa, 1961.

The major focus of this study was directed chiefly to the identification of reading interests of Catholic high school girls, Grades IX - XII.

The subjects were 460 girls selected from five Catholic high schools; their mean chronological age was 15.5 and IQ's ranged from borderline to very superior, with a mean of 106.7. The data was furnished by the Questionnaire filled in by the subjects and supplemented by another questionnaire completed by 42 high school librarians and an evaluation of girls' popular books carried out by ten experts in adolescent literature.

The data showed that the content of books for adolescent girls dealt with religion, ideals, romance, teenage life, humor, and self-improvement. A fair degree of monogeneity among the girls in their choice of reading materials was found, despite the range in mental maturity, high-school grade, and chronological age. The attendance at the movies and the wide use of the televison did not decrease the amount of reading. The quantity of materials read was disappointingly small, 13 books in eight months on the average, with a narrow range of interests.

A reading guidance program to meet the school's objectives was recommended.